

NOTES ON THE CERTHIINÆ OF INDIA,—by W. E. BROOKS, ESQ., C. E.,  
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With a good series of about thirty to work with, it appears to me that we have decidedly five species in India.

I.—CERTHIA HIMALAYANA, Vigors.

A well-known species which need not be described here, and which is distinguished from the others by its well-barred tail, the other species having the tail only occasionally obscurely rayed.

II.—CERTHIA HODGSONI, Brooks.

The differences between this bird and the European *C. familiaris* have been already pointed out.\*

I regard the *four* outer plain or unspotted primaries of *C. Hodgsoni* *versus* the *three* plain ones of the English bird, as conclusive evidence of the distinctness of the two species. The much longer and straighter bill, with the white lower mandible; and the greyer and less rufous tone of plumage, with much whiter spotting on the back and head, should also be taken into account. The legs and feet of the English bird are also, as a rule, darker. The voices of the two birds differ; that of the English one being much louder and somewhat different in tone. The Indian species is much more silent. I have before noted the conspicuous difference in the eggs.

This species is the *C. familiaris* of some Indian ornithologists.

III.—CERTHIA NIPALENSIS, Hodgson.

*Certhia discolor*, Blyth.

Any one who has examined Mr. Hodgson's drawing of *C. Nipalensis*, must have seen at a glance that it represents the earthy brown breasted bird; and I have therefore no hesitation in uniting both species under Hodgson's term.

The supposition that the brown-breasted bird could be identical with either of the two species next to be described, is a great mistake, as a good series at once shews. As far as my own observation goes, the sexes of the *Certhiinae* are alike in plumage. Even the young and old are very similar. The earth-brown tint of *C. Nipalensis* commences from the base of the lower mandible; and the chin and throat, which are generally protected from getting soiled in most birds, are in this species as dark as any part of the breast. The idea that the brown lower surface is merely produced by the feathers being soiled, is against the rule with regard to Creepers, which preserve the purity of their plumage in a remarkable manner, even near large manufacturing towns. The colour on the breast of *C. Nipalensis* is, as Mr. Blyth observed, a fast colour.

\* Journ. A. S. Soc. Beng. Vol. XLI, Part II, p. 73.

The tail of this species is more rufous than that of any of the others. In other respects the colouration of the *upper* parts is similar to that of the two species next to be described. *C. Nipalensis* has a large and rather strong bill compared with those of the others.

Hab. Nepal and Sikkim.

IV.—*CERTHIA STOLICZKÆ*, n. sp.

This species, as far as the upper surface is concerned, resembles *C. Nipalensis*, but the bill is much shorter and weaker. The chin and throat are fulvous, and breast warm buff, increasing in rufous tone to the flanks and lower tail coverts, which are bright rusty brown. The rump and upper tail coverts, as in *C. Nipalensis*, are bright rusty brown, even brighter perhaps than in that species; but the colour of the tail feathers is less rufous, particularly so as regards the shafts of the feathers. The long claws, especially those of the anterior toes, and the large foot, are noticeable in this new species; in fact, it could almost be separated by the foot alone. Sometimes its throat alone is nearly white, but from this point the fulvous tone covers the lower surface.

I have much pleasure in naming it after my friend Dr. Stoliczka, to whom Indian naturalists are so much indebted.

Hab. Sikkim.

V.—*CERTHIA MANDELLII*, n. sp.\*

A bird of similar dimensions to the last, but with a longer and more curved bill, and smaller feet and claws.

The throat and breast are bright silky white; abdomen and sides tinged with brown, and flanks slightly washed with rusty: lower tail coverts pale rusty brown; upper tail coverts, as in the last, bright rusty brown; tail plain brown with the shafts rather rufous. In the colour of the tail being less rufous, this bird differs much from the last. Its principal characteristics are, however, the pure white breast, instead of the buff one of the last species, while the upper surface of the bird is very similar.

One of the eight specimens differs notably from all the others, by having a warm rosy tinge suffusing the white of the breast and throat. I do not, however, think this sufficient ground upon which to make a new species, and will not, therefore, name it provisionally; but will leave this to any one who will take the trouble to investigate the creepers further than I have done. The present species is named after Mr. Mandelli who sent me the two new species I have just described, and who placed all the creepers in his collection at my service.

Hab. Sikkim.

In examining examples of this genus, care is necessary to keep the long loose feathers in their proper places. The rufous feathers of the rump often

\* This species is probably the "*Certhia Nipalensis*" of Jerdon's Birds of India; as the "lower parts" of the last are not "pure white."

get twisted out of place, so as to shew more or less on the under surface of the bird. So also with regard to the correct colour of the flanks. I conclude with a table of dimensions.

	Wing.	Tail.	Bill.	
<i>C. Nipalensis</i> ;	2.7	3.1	.55	
"	2.64	3.15	.57	
"	2.7	3.15	.54	
"	2.76	3.2	.55	
"	2.65	3.12	.5	
<i>C. Stoliczkæ</i> ,	2.75	3.25	.47	
"	2.9	3.3	.45	
"	2.78	3.16	.45	
"	2.67	3.12	.42	
"	2.86	3.22	.43	
"	2.78	2.84	.45	
"	2.57	2.52	.43	
<i>C. Hodgsoni</i> ,	2.54	2.5	.68	
"	2.5	2.3	.67	
<i>C. familiaris</i> ,	2.33	2.2	.43	
"	2.45	2.15	.53	
"	2.4	2.15	.42	
<i>C. Mandellii</i> ,	2.5	2.7	.44	
"	2.73	2.83	.56	
"	2.7	2.3	.52	
"	2.7	2.67	.53	
"	2.6	2.6	.56	The rosy-breasted example.
"	2.5	2.47	.45	
"	2.65	2.35	.55	
"	2.32	1.82	.25	A young bird but fully feathered.

Mr. Mandelli says "to my recollection the dirty and brown-throated and breasted creepers (*C. Nipalensis*) are always found at low elevations. The white-breasted ones (*C. Mandellii*), always at high elevations. I know nothing about the yellow-breasted ones." (*C. Stoliczkæ*).

The latter were procured by Mr. Mandelli's shikaree but at what elevation I have not ascertained.